

Sri ParaaSara BhaTTar's

# ASHTASLOKI



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# ASHTASLOKI

By

SRI PARASARA BHATTAR



Commentaries

By

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NamperumAL - SrI rangam



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Ulaguiya ninRa PerumAL with nAcchimArs - Thirukkadalmalai (Thanks: SrI Senthil)



॥ श्रीः ॥

श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः

श्री पराशरभट्टार्यकृया

॥ अष्टश्लोकी ॥

SRI PARAASARA BHATTAR'S

ASHTASLOKI



### INTRODUCTION:

The most succinct introduction to SwAmy ParAsara Bhattar's ashTa SLOki is by Dr.S.Padmanabhan of the Department of Sanskrit, Madras University:

"The opening verse of this octad explains the significance of the three syllables, 'a', 'u' and 'm' constituting the PraNava with which the ashTAKshara (called Mantra Brahman by ParASara Battar) begins. The second verse deals with the indeclinable 'namah' forming the middle part of this sacred mantra. The third verse expounds the significance of the word, 'nArAyaNAya', used in the dative case. The fourth verse sets forth the difficulties that stand in the way of a devotee and suggests the means of avoiding them. In the fifth verse, the author recommends meditation and the benefits derived from the dvaya mantra. The sixth verse speaks of the importance of resorting to Lakshmi to get rid of the feelings of "I" and "Mine"; their removal promotes the daasya - attitude congenial for liberation. In the seventh verse, ParAsara Battar paraphrases Lord KrishNa's assurance found in Bhagavad GitA (18.66) 'sarvadharmAn parityajya.....mA Suca:'. In the last verse, the author appeals to the Lord that in spite of the above assurance, he is still unable to decide on what to do. Even the idea of surrendering to the Lord stems from His grace. As such, he has to wait for salvation, firmly believing that the Lord would forgive all his sins".

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## SCOPE OF COVERAGE OF ASHTA SLOKI:

The first four sLOkams of this octad elaborate on the significance of the first of the three rahasyams, ashTAKshara Mantram. The fifth and the sixth sLOkams deal with the second of the rahasya trayams, (viz), dvayam. The seventh sLOkam links to the third rahasyam of SrI VaishNavAs (viz), Carama sLOkam. The 8th sLOkam is about the placement of the rakshaNam of the soul (jeevAtmA) at the sacred feet of the Lord with abject conviction that the individual soul is totally helpless and has MahA visvAsam in the ParamAtmA as a rakshakan and remover of all Moksha virOdhis. This makes the jeevan free from the burdens and fear about its adhikAram and yOgyathai and it lives now in a state of nirbharam and nirbhayam.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE THREE RAHASYAS COVERED BY ASHTA SLOKI:

The three rahayams covered are:

- Moola Mantram,
- dvayam and
- Carama sLOkam.

## MOOLA MANTRA:

On Moola Mantra, Dr.N.S.Anantha RangAchAr SwAmy (Dr.NSA SwAmy) comments: "The Moola Mantra or ashTAKshara (mantram with 8 aksharams) enlightens the essential nature of the JeevAtman, as being totally subservient to the Lord, and in that way develops a strong aspiration for attaining the Lord without delay. Thus, he will be having the "adhikAra" or qualification for performing the means of salvation". It is considered a dhAraka mantram since it causes the acquisition of "satta" and reveals the Jeevan's inalienable nature of subservience to Iswaran. This mantram was taught by Sriman nArAyaNa to







sage nara at BadrikAsramam and is revered as the first among all the three vyApaka mantras (ashTAKshari, VaasudEva dvadaSAkshari and the VishNu shaTakshari). SwAmy Desikan salutes the greatness of this mantra as the most supreme of all mantras: "mantrANAm paramO mantra". The fortunate ones achieving Siddhi through upAsanam of ashTAKsharam is saluted this way: "ashTAKsharam samASritya tE jagmu: vaishNavam padam". When ashTAKshara is recited without PraNava and the dative case (Aaya), it becomes a tAntrika mantram that can be used by every one.

The first aksharam of ashTAKsharam is PraNavam and it consists of three letters (अ + उ + म a+u+ma). "अ (a)" is recognized as the Supreme Brahman: "akArENa akhilAdhAra: paramAtmA abhidhIyatE". He is the Jagath KaarANan and bearer of the Universe and rakshakan of the entire universe. He is the protector of all with His divine consort, MahA Lakshmi. The second letter "उ (u)" stands for the relationship between Isvaran and the JeevAthma, who is subservient to Isvaran and nobody else (Bhagavath SEshatvam). MakAram "म (ma)" signifies the JeevAtman. which is distinctly different from insentient and Isvaran. ukAram उ (u) defines then the sambhandham (relationship) between the Lord and the Jeevan, which does not belong to anyone else. It refers to the ananyArha sEshathvam of the Jeevan. The other meaning given to ukAram is that it signifies PirAtti. akAram अ a (Iswaran) united with ukAram उ u (MahA Lakshmi) constitutes the divya mithunam. When the Jeevan meditates on this unique divya dampathis and Their significance and conducts itself as the ananyArha sEshan to them, the Jeevan gets fulfilled and attains the highest of PurushArthams (viz), Moksham.

### DVAYA MANTRA:

This mantra is used to perform our SaraNagati to the divya dampathis. It is



saluted as Mantra Raaja (King of MantrAs). It covers both upAya (means) and the upEya (end goal). It is considered as a VaraNa-samarpaNa mantra that involves both a prayer to the Lord for protection and the offering of oneself to the nithya Kaimkaryam for the divya dampathis. It was created by the Lord by the union of two separate mantras from kaThavalli (Poorva and utara bhAgams). The Poorva bhAgam deals with the upAyam, where the Jeevan seeks the Lord (VaraNam) as the object of his SaraNagati. The utara bhAgam is about the Jeevan's placing its svaroopam, Raksha bharam and Phalan arising from that raksha - all these three items - at the sacred feet of the Lord. The Poorva bhAgam is said to have the five angams of Prapatti and the utara bhAgam the angi, the key act of bhara samarpaNam. The ten meanings of dvayam are given to us by SwAmy Desikan. The deep meanings of the dvaya mantra has been housed in AchArya RaamAnuja's SaraNagati gadyam. The unique aspect of the dvaya Mantram is that the mere utterance of this mantram, even once (**sakrut uccAraNa mAtram**) will lead to Moksham. BhagavAn instructs us to surrender to Him with dvaya mantra alone and get elevated thereafter to the status of one that has done his duty (**kruta kritya**):

अनेनैव तु मन्त्रेण स्वात्मानं मयि निक्षिपेत् ।

मयि निक्षिप्त-कर्तव्यो कृतकृत्यो भविष्यति ॥

anEnaiva tu mantrENa svAtmAnam mayi nikshipEt |

mayi nikshipta-kartavyO kruta-krityO bhavishyati ||

### CARAMA SLOKAM:

The celebrated Carama sLOkam was revealed to Arjuna by the Lord Sri KrishNa from His seat in front of Arjuna's chariot in the middle of MahA BhAratha war at KurukshEtram. Arjuna was confused about his duties as a Kshatriya, when he sorrowed over the deaths of his relatives and AchAryAs in the war to start. He threw down his weapons not knowing the difference between dharmam and



adharmam. He surrendered to Lord KrishNa and begged Him to show the right way and lead him out of his confusion. Our compassionate Lord taught Arjuna about the nature of the Jeevan, the ultimate PurushArthams and ways to gain them. First PArthaSarathy taught Arjuna the Karma yOga, Jn~Ana yOgA and Bhakti yOga as the accessories to the path of liberation. Arjuna felt that Bhakti and Karma yOga-s were too difficult to practice by him and sought for the anugraham of another route that was easier and within his power to practice. That is when the most merciful ParthasArathy blessed Arjuna about the Prapatti yOgam thru the Carama sLOkam, which states: "Abandoning desire in all spiritual means that are not possible of being practiced, seek refuge in me alone; I shall redeem you from all sins; do not grieve". This celebrated Carama sLOkam takes this form:

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

sarva-dharmAn parityajya mAmEkam SaraNam vraja |

aham tvA sarva-pApEbhyO mokshayishyAmi maa Suca: ||

Dr. NSA SwAmy comments that the first half of this sLOkam ordains the means of attainment of spiritual perfection (upAya vidhAyaka) and the second half refers to the phalan of such performance and is dependent on the injunction (Vidhi or Command) given in the first half of this sLOkam.

### THE FORMAT OF THE COVERAGE:

We shall start with the individual sLOkams, add the meanings and commentaries provided by Drs. V.N. VedAnta Desikan of Oppiliappan Koil and S.PadmanAbhan of DevanArviLAgam and conclude with adiyEn's summary of important points to be remembered.







## ADDITIONAL READING MATERIALS:

SwAmy Desikan's magnum opus is Srimad Rahasya traya sAram and is the most magnificent elaboration of the profound and subtle aspects of the three rahasyams - Moola Mantram (ashTAKsharam), dvayam and Carama sLOkam. Please refer to the e-books in the Sundara Simham and Ahobilavalli series for additional information about the Rahasya traya sAram:

<http://www.sundarasimham.org>

<http://www.ahobilavalli.org>

**Srimad Rahasya traya sAram:** AhObilavalli e-books 91, 92 and 93. This book is a distillation of the essence of Srimad Rahasya traya sAram by VaikuNTha Vaasi Svacchandham ArAvamudAcchAr SwAmy.

**Srimad Rahasya traya sAram:** Section from SwAmy Desika Sahasra nAmams by Thirukkudanthai Desikan: Sundara Simham e-book # 91.

**VirOdha ParihAram:** Sundara Simham e-book # 107; This is SwAmy Desikan's Sri Sookthi. It has been designed by our compassionate AchAryan to answer the questions on the three rahasyams that might arise in the minds of his disciples.

**Chillarai Rahasyams of Swami Desikan:** Rahasya PadhavI and Rahasya Navaneetham (Sundara Simham e-books 68 and 69 respectively).

Chillarai Rahasyams dealing with the abbreviated commentaries on the three rahasyams housed in Sundara Simham e-book series: Thiru **Mantira churukku** (# 24), **dvaya Churukku** (# 13) and **Carama sLOka churukku** (# 20).





# slokams and commentaries



PrAchAryar of SrI bhattar- bhashyakArar at  
ahobilam



SrivatsAngar (kUrESar)





॥ श्रीः ॥



SrI parASara bhattar

PARAASARA BHATTAR'S TANIYAN

श्रीपराशरभट्टार्यः श्रीरङ्गेशपुरोहितः ।

श्रीवत्साङ्गसुतः श्रीमान् श्रेयसे मेऽस्तु भूयसे ॥

SrI parASara bhaTTaarya SrIrangeSa purOhita: |

SrIvatsAngasuta: SrImAn SrEyase me astu bhUyase ||

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akArArthO vishNu: - SrI VishNu NARayaNan - SrI RanganAthann





## SLOKAM 1

अकारार्थो विष्णुर्जगदुदयरक्षाप्रलयकृत्

मकारार्थो जीवस्तदुपकरणं वैष्णवमिदम् ।

उकारोऽनन्यार्हं नियमयति संबन्धमनयोः

त्रयीसारस्त्र्यात्मा प्रणव इममर्थं समदिशत् ॥

akArArthO vishNu: jagat udaya rakshA praLaya krt

makArArthO jIva: tat upakaraNam vaishNavam idam |

ukArA: ananyArham niyamayati sambandham anayO:

trayIsAra: tryAtmA praNava: imam artham samadiSat ||

MEANING BY DR.V.N.VEDANTA DESIKAN (DR.VNV):

(This verse explains the significance of PraNavam, the first word in ashTaksharam). अ (a), उ (u), म (ma), are united (in PraNavam). 'a' refers to Lord VishNu, the all-encompassing, all pervading, who is the Creator, Protector and Terminator of all Universe. 'ma' refers to jIva, the individual soul. The intervening 'u' binds them in a never-breakable link, in which jIva is a subservient to VishNu, in a unique, one-to-one, intimate relation. And jIva's existence in this relation is as emotionless as that of a garland or fragrant sandal paste. PraNavam is the essence of all VedAs. That the jIva is for Para Brahman and only for Him is the effect of all the concealed 4<sup>th</sup> case (Aaya), later to be explicitly put as nArAyaNAya.







## DR.S.PADMANABHAN'S COMMENTS ON THE FIRST SLOKAM:

The PraNava constitutes the three syllables, "अ (a), उ (u), म (ma)". "अ (a)" connotes VishNu as the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe as both its instrumental and material cause. The syllable "म (ma)" stands for the individual soul, who is a mere instrument subserving the Lord, meant for His exclusive use and satisfaction. The syllable "उ (u)" coming in between, indicates the inseparable relationship between these two with a restriction (niyamayati). To explain, the sentient and the insentient entities are both subservient to the Lord.

## ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS BY DR.V.SATHAKOPAN (DR.VS):

ashTAKsharam or Thiru Mantram is sakala vEda sAram (trayI sAras-trayAtmA praNavam). It removes all anishTams (amangaLams/inauspiciousness). It confers all desired phalans. It serves as the means to amalgamate all upAyams. It is usable by people of all Jaathis based on their adhikArams through Vaidhika or tAntrik routes described in the PaancarAtra Agamam. It has 8 aksharams and Upanishads have revealed that this ashTAKshara mantram is all about the Vaibhavam of SrI VishNu nArAyaNan. If one comprehends the correct meaning of ashTAKsharam, one understands the relationship between Iswaran, cEtanam and acEtanam (tattva trayam). If one is blessed to understand the correct meanings of ashTAKshara mantram through upadEsam from a sadAcAryan, then one gets a clearer perception of the svaroopams of Iswaran and Jeevan, which in turn destroys one's ahankAram and mamakAram and that helps to make our progress towards Moksham.

PraNavam is made up of three aksharams: अ + उ + म (a+u+ma). The first aksharam is "अ (a)". In Sanskrit, the dAthu "av" means Kaatthal or Protection. VyAkaraNa sAstram states that "av" refers to the Lord, who protects every





thing. Hence, akAram (अ a) of PraNavam suggests that we meditate on the Lord, Who is the protector of all (cEtanams and acEtanams).

akarArthO vishNu: Jagat udaya rakshA praLaya krut - This is the first pAdam of the first sLOkam of ashTa SLOki. VishNu is recognized here as the reason behind the birth, protection and dissolution of this universe. He is the Jagath kAraNan, Jagath rakshakan and the dissolver of the created universe.

The second pAdam of this sLOkam deals with the aksharam "म ma" of PraNavam: makArArthO jIva: tat upakaraNam vaishNavam idam. makAram stands for the tattvam of Jeevan, which is distinctly different from Isvara and acEtana tattvams. The jeevan's svaroopam (inherent nature) is jna~nanandham (knowledge and bliss); it is a Seshan (unconditional liege) to Iswaran, its Master at all times and places. Jeevan has no independence of its own. Jeevan has Jn~Anam as its guNam in contrast to acEtanam. Jeevan is atomic in size compared to its Lord, who is Vibhu (all pervasive and immense). VaishNava doctrines (tathvam) aver that Jeevan is the bhOgya vasthu (upakaraNam) for the Lord (Iswaran), the Sarva Seshi.

The third pAdam is: ukAra: ananyArham niyamayati sambandham anayO: - The anvaya kramam is: "ukAra: anayO: sambandham ananyArham niyamayati". ukAram is the second aksharam of the PraNavam. Its meaning is the rejection of the sambandham with any tattvam other than Iswaran. ukAram represents the inseparable link between the Jeevan and Iswaran. This ukAram in union with "अ (a)" (Iswaran) and "म (ma)" (Jeevan) points out that the Jeevan is not subservient to anyone except the Lord (ananyArhan). This is the essence of Vedam (trayI sArastryAtmA praNavam imam artham samadiSat) as indicated by the fourth pAdam of the first sLOkam.





## SLOKAM 2

मन्त्रब्रह्मणि मध्यमेन नमसा पुंसः स्वरूपं गतिः

गम्यं शिक्षितमीक्षितेन पुरतः पश्चादपि स्थानतः ।

स्वातन्त्र्यं निजरक्षणं च समुचिता वृत्तिश्च नान्योचिता

तस्यैवेति हरेर्विविच्य कथितं स्वस्यापि नार्हं ततः ॥

mantra brahmaNi madhyamena namasA pumsa: svarUpam gati:

gamyam Sikshitam Ikshitena purata: paScAdapi sthAnata: |

svAtantryam nijarakshaNam ca samucitA vrttiSca na anya ucitA

tasyaiva iti hare: vivicya kathitam svasyApi nArham tata: ||

### MEANING BY DR.VNV:

[The significance of the second word 'namah' is now described. 'namah' means surrender (a technique). But if we split it as 'na-mah', it means 'na mama' - 'not for me'. It rules out the self totally. A self-abnegation is thus implied].

**aum namah** I am the property for the Lord; that is my inherent nature. I have no independence. I am not for me.

**na mah namah** To perform an upAya, even to surrender, which is so simple, I am not competent. He does it through me. I have no claim for achieving it.

**namah** Re: the goal. Service at the Lord's feet, I do it only for His  
**nArAyaNaaya** pleasure. Nothing for me. I have nothing to gain even therefrom







The verse corrects this attitude to Swaroopam, upaya-kartrutvam and upAya-bhoktrutvam. In brief, the individual self has no independence.

#### DR.S.PADMANABHAN'S COMMENTS:

The indeclinable "namas" which is the second unit in the sacred mantra (praNava+namO+nArAyaNAya) explains the essential nature of the individual soul. namah which literally means "salutation to", can be split again into two syllables and is read along with the syllable "m" of the PraNava. Thus we have the clause "m", "na" and "mah", which can be interpreted as ma, the Jeeva, na = not, mah = mine (mah is genitive singular of "m"). In other words, it means that the jeeva is not for its own sake. Another interpretation: namah as a single unbroken unit means "salutations" which is the means (upAya) for attaining salvation. Yet another interpretation: If we split the indeclinable as na+mah and then take namah together as a single word, we get the expression "namah na mah". This means that the upAya mentioned above is not for myself, that is, even that is for the sake of the Lord. Finally by construing the two syllables na+mah along with the last word of mantrabrahman, we arrive at the expression nArAyaNAya na mah, which means that even the service which is the very purpose of human existence is for the sake of the Lord and not for anybody else.

In other words, the term namah connotes that

- the individual is the subject of the Lord;
- the means and the goal of salvation are also dependent on the will of the Lord;
- even the highest goal of human life, that is, kainkarya, called vrtti is meant for the Lord only; and that
- even the upAya is not for the jeeva.





## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY DR.VS

"nama" is the upAyam for overcoming the illusion that the jeevan has that it is an independent entity (svAtantryam). With the understanding that jeevan is totally dependent on the Lord (Iswaran), the jeevan gets rid of his leanings towards ahankAram (me) and mamakAram (mine).



He is an independent Entity

There are many meanings for the nama: sabdham:

- "salutation to" is one meaning;





- The jeevan is totally subservient to the Lord with no svatantram of any kind is the second meaning;
- the upAyam for Moksham, the goal of the Moksham as Sriman nArAyaNan and the kaimkarya vrtti of the Jeevan is totally controlled by the Lord as its Master is the third meaning;
- **namah** means SaraNAgati. namah is the upAyam for SaraNAgati or samarpaNam of the Jeevan to the Lord in the Yajn~am of SaraNAgati. This is yet another meaning of namah sabdham that follows PraNavam in the ashTAKshara mantram.

The first and the second pAdam of the second sLOkam of ashTa sLOki focuses on the madhyama padam of ashTAKsharam (namah): "mantra brahmaNi madhyamena namasA pumsa: svarUpam gati: gamyam Sikshitham Ikshitena purata: paScAdApi sthAnata:". The middle portion of Mantra Brahman (ashTAKshari) is "nama:" sabdham, which defines the intrinsic nature (svarUpam), upAyam/means (gati:) and upEyam/goal (gamyam). This pAdam points out the nama: sabdham refers to the jeevan not having any existence outside the Lord as an independent entity and the Lord is the only One who blesses it to have kartrutvam (capacity to engage in action). The phalan-s (fruits) arising from those activities undertaken belong to the Lord as the Master of the Jeevan. The confusion about the Jeevan's svaroopam as a Seshan, upAya Kartrutvam, upAya bhOktrutvam are cleared in this section of the sLOkam. True svarUpa Jn~Anam that the Jeevan is totally subservient to the Lord and the jeevan has no svAtanryam whatsoever is brought out by this section.







I am subservient to Lord NARAYANA!



### SLOKAM 3

अकारार्थयैव स्वमहमथ मह्यं न निवहाः

नराणां नित्यानामयनमिति नारायणपदम् ।

यमाहास्मै कालं सकलमपि सर्वत्र सकलासु

अवस्थास्वाविः स्युः मम सहजकैङ्कर्यविधयः ॥

akArArthAyaiva svamahamatha mahyam na nivahA:

narANAm nityAnAm ayanam iti nArAyaNapadam |

yamAhAsmai kAlam sakalamapi sarvatra sakalAsu

avasthAsvAvi: syu: mama sahaja kainkarya vidhaya: ||

#### MEANING BY DR.VNV:

(What was explained under PraNavam in Verse 1 is elaborated here).

"I am purely subservient, in a natural manner, to the one Lord, nArAyaNa, the support for all life. I must perform service intimately at His feet at all times in all possible fashions and in a natural matter-of-duty manner."

#### COMMENTS BY DR.S.PADMANABHAN:

The word nArAyaNa used in the fourth case, nArAyaNAya, is explained in this verse. It is composed of two words nara and ayana, which mean 'the abode of nara-s', that is, the individual souls which are eternal (nitya). The expression namO nArAyaNAya means that "I" (svayam) exist for the sake of "a" namely nArAyaNa and not for my own sake. The dative termination "य" (ya) in the







expression nArAyaNAya conveys that the service and devotion of the individual soul under all conditions and at all times are meant for the Lord alone.

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY DR.VS

After covering the meanings of PraNavam and nama: sabdham in the first and second sLOkams, Bhattar deals now with the meanings of nArAyaNa sabdham with the dative case (nArAyaNAya) in this (third) and the next (fourth) sLOkam.

"nArAyaNAya" is to be split into nAra, ayana and the dative case (Aaya) to get the complete meanings. nArAyaNa padam without its dative case padam is made up of nAra and ayana padams. We can split in to either one type of samAsam known as (tatpurusha mode of combination/vERRumai PuNarcchi) or Bahuvreehi samAsam (anmozhi thohai).

In the Tathpurusha SamAsam (TPS), nArAyaNa can be qualified as "nArANAm ayanam". nAram signifies the assembly of jeevans. ayanam means upAyam (Means), Phalan (fruits) and AdhAram (substratum or foundation). In this mode of definition (TPS), nArAyaNan is the means, phalan of enjoyment and AdhAram for the cEtanAcEtanams that arose out of Him. In TPS, nArAyaNa manifests as bahir VyApti (external pervasion). He is the ground and support or AdhAram of all the three worlds (VishNu AdhAram yathA caitEt trailOKyam samavastitam). He is the upAya (the means of attainment), upEya (the goal) and AdhAram (the support). TPS defines nArAyaNa as "nArANAm ayanam", where as another mode of definition called Bahuvreehi samAsam (BVS) qualifies Him as "nArA: ayanam yasya".

In the Bahuvreehi SamAsam (BVS), nArAyaNa is One who has the cEtanAcEtanams as His abode. He has the nArams as His ayanam. He enters in to them and that is linked to His anthar VyApti (internal pervasion). In the Tathpurusha SamAsam, nArAyaNan is recognized as manifesting His Bahir vyApti (external pervasion) and is the abode of cEtanAcEtanam.







One has to remember that nArAyaNa in Bahir or anthar VyApti is not tainted by the defects or deficiencies of cEtanAcEtanams. He is thus distinct and different from the entities of cEtanams and acEtanams. He is the hEya rahita "naran" and the sentient (cEtanams) and the insentient (acEtanams) are inseparably related to Him. nara pervades, controls and supports the cEtanAcEtana prapancham.

The dative case (Aaya) when added to nArAyaNa leads to the padam of nArAyaNAya. The Aaya sabdham signifies Kaimkaryam. The prayer here is for eternal loving service (nitya kaimkaryam). Kaimkarya Prapthi is requested here to the divya mithunam. This kaimkaryam includes both Bhagavath and BhAgavatha Kaimkaryam. This kaimkaryam is the phalan of sEshatvam (subservience) of the Jeevan to the Sarva sEshi, the Lord.





Intimate special relationship only with nArAyaNa - Thiruvانبil vadivazhagar





## SLOKAM 4

देहासक्तात्मबुद्धिर्यदि भवति पदं साधु विद्यात् तृतीयम्

स्वातन्त्र्यान्यो यदि स्यात् प्रथममितरशेषत्वधीश्चेत् द्वितीयम् ।

आत्मत्राणोन्मुखश्चेन्नम इति च पदं बान्धवाभासलोलः

शब्दं नारायणारूपं विषयचपलधीश्चेत् चतुर्थीं प्रपन्नः ॥

dehAsakta Atmabuddhi: yadi bhavati padam sAdhu vidyAt trtIyam

svAtantryAndhO yadi syAt prathamam itara SeshatvadhIScet dvitIyam |

AtmatrANa un mukhaScEt nama iti ca padam bAndhava AbhAsaOlal:

Sabdam nArAyaNAkhyam vishayacapaladhIScet caturthIm prapanna: ||

### MEANING BY DR.VNV:

A prapanna revolves in his mind the whole of Thirumantra, First, PraNava (a + u + m). The jIva has a knowledge faculty and has distinction from the physical body. He remembers his subservience to the Lord. implied in 'a', since he has no independence and has also no such intimate special relation with any one else, except nArAyANa. Secondly, 'namah' implies that the soul has no right or duty to ensure his good, because he has entrusted his whole to the Lord. 'Not mine' is the duty of my protection; this is the import of 'namah'.

Thirdly, 'nArAyANa' etymologically shows the manner of the Lord supporting all souls. He is the soul to all souls. All souls rest and reside in Him. Naturally, our duty is only towards one such benefactor. The 'Aaya' (the 4<sup>th</sup> case) emphasizes not only that we offer service only to Him but also His pleasure is our only goal. We will remain emotionless even in that act. That is the true







spirit of a prapanna. He has no ahamkAra from SvAtantrya, upAyakartrutva or from upEyabhogyatva.

#### COMMENTS BY DR.S.PADMANABHAN:

For one who has the erroneous attachment towards his body as the Self, ParASara offers the advice that one should constantly contemplate on the third syllable of PraNava, which is "ॠ (ma)". This would help one to get rid of the mistaken identity that the body is the Self, by enlightening the real nature of the individual soul. If a man becomes blinded by the feeling that he is an independent agent of actions, ignoring the fact that he is always dependent upon the Lord, ParASara advises him to meditate upon the first sacred sound of the syllable namely "a". This would put him in the right perspective, pointing out the Supremacy of Lord VishNu. In the case of those who wrongly believe that they are under the control of some other beings inferior to the Lord, ParASara advises them to meditate upon the second syllable "u". This "u" would bestow upon them a constant awareness of their relationship with the Lord. Still if an aspirant feels that he can take care of his own self (Atma-trANa), independent of the Lord, ParASara feels that he should concentrate on the expression namah (na+mah), which quickly removes any feeling of individual self-sufficiency. In the case of those who are carried away by worldly relationships and ties of blood, such person should constantly remind themselves of the word nArAyaNa. This as explained earlier, points to the Lord as the ultimate goal of all human endeavour. Lastly, if the aspirant is enslaved by the sensual enjoyments, he should think repeatedly of the connotation of the dative suffix, "ya" which means "for the sake of". This at once, brings him to the senses and reminds him of the fact that he is "for the sake of Lord nArAyaNa", and that sensual enjoyment is not the summum bonum of human existence.

ParASara wants to drive home the point that the mantrabrahman offers all protection to the erring individual soul provided he cares to recite it everyday. It never fails him and always shows him the correct path by pointing out the





exact relationship in which he stands with the supreme being.

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY DR.VS

Here, Bhattar instructs us about which letter or padam of ashTAKsharam one has to meditate upon to overcome the negative impacts of the jeevan being assailed by dehAtma Brahman, SvAtantrya Brahman and attraction to devatAntrams.





## SLOKAM 5

नेतृत्वं नित्ययोगं समुचितगुणजातं तनुख्यापनं च

उपायं कर्तव्यभागं त्वथ मिथुनपरं प्राप्यमेवं प्रसिद्धम् ।

स्वामित्वं प्रार्थनां च प्रबलतरविरोधिप्रहाणं दशैतान्

मन्तारं त्रायते चेत्यधिगतनिगमः षट्पदोऽयं द्विखण्डः ॥

netritvam nitya yOgam samucita guNajAtam tanukhyApanam ca

upAyam kartavyabhAgam tvatha mithunaparam prApyamevam prasiddham |

svAmitvam prArthanAm ca prabalatara virOdhi prahANam daSaitAn

mantAram trAyate cetyadhigata nigama: shaTpadOyam dvikhaNDa: ||

MEANING BY DR.VNV:

MahAlakshmi, who is ever with the Lord, who will commend a devotee's case, who will have an overwhelming influence over the Lord (by reason of the love between them) is a great asset to the Prapanna. The Lord has a Charming form and His feet are easily available for us to cling to. We have only to perform Prapatti at His feet. The Couple will secure our service. Our Master, to whom alone we should always render devoted service, is He alone. And we should wipe out the haughtiness arising from assumed independence or from the performance of the upAya or from the pleasure in the upEya attainment - because total surrender and complete self-annihilation are the marks of a true Prapanna from the import of the Mantra and its comprehension by constant contemplation.







Sri, bhu, neela devigaL with AdhikESava perumal of Sriperumbudur on  
vaikuntadwadasi - (thanks SrI Sridhar)

COMMENTARY BY DR.S.PADMANABHAN:

The first four verses thus explain the significance of the ashTAKshari mantra which forms the first of the rahasyatraya of the SrivaishNava school. In the fifth verse, ParASara explains the significance of the dvaya mantram:

श्रीमन्नारायणचरणौ शरणं प्रपद्ये ।

श्रीमते नारायणाय नमः ॥

SrIman nArAyaNa caranau SaraNam prapadye|

SrImatE nArAyaNaya namah ||

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SrIman nArAyaNa caraNau !



This mantra has two parts in it comprising six words. The first term "SrI" which is the name of the consort of Lord nArAyaNa connotes the sense of guidance or leadership (**netrutvam**). It is Goddess SrI who ushers the devotee unto the Lord, pleads on behalf of the devotee and ultimately secures his deliverance. This function is also known as PurushakAra. The termination **matup** in Sriman indicates eternal relationship (nitya yoga) subsisting between the Lord and SrI. The term **nArAyaNa** which literally means "the abode of nara-s" brings out the benevolent qualities of the Lord (**samucita guNa jAta**) such as compassion and easy accessibility. The word **caraNau** meaning "feet indicates the graceful figure of the Lord (**tanukhyApanam**). The word **SaraNam** meaning "whole hearted surrender" points to the upAya to be employed by the soul for his own salvation. The word **prapadyE** (I resort to) explains the duty to be discharged by the devotee (**kartavyabhAga**). All the words of the first part of the dvaya mantra are thus explained.

The second part of the mantra - **SrImatE nArAyaNAya namah** suggests four more essentials. The word **SrImatE** stands for the divine couple LakshminArAyaNa who are the masters of all the jeevAs. The term nArAyaNa actually conveys the Lordship and sovereignty of VishNu (**svAmitvam**). The dative case in the word nArAyaNAya lays stress upon eternal service to be done by the Jeevan to his Master (prArthana). Finally, the word **namah** indicates the desirability of getting rid of egotism which is a very powerful impediment in setting liberation (**virOdhiprahANa**). ParASara explains further that this dvaya mantra protects one who repeats it and is part of the Sruti itself.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY DR.VS

Consolidated commentary for sLOkams 5 and 6 is given under the sixth sLOkam. Both sLOkam 5 and 6 deal with the significance and meanings of the dvaya mantram.







Lakshmi is the inseparable Consort of Lord SrIman nArAyaNA!  
SrI PrahlAda Varadan and thAyAr - Ahobilam



## SLOKAM 6

ईशानां जगतामधीशदयितां नित्यानपायां श्रियं

संश्रित्याश्रयणोचिताखिलगुणस्याङ्घ्री हरेराश्रये ।

इष्टोपायतया श्रिया च सहितायात्मेश्वरायाथये

कर्तुं दास्यमशेषमप्रतिहतं नित्यं त्वहं निर्ममः ॥

ISAnAm jagatAm adhISadayitAm nitya anapAyAm Sriyam

samSrityASrayaNa ucita akhila guNasyAnghrI hare: ASraye |

ishTa upAyatayA SriyA ca sahitAyAtma ISvarAyArthaye

kartum dAsyam aSesham apratihata nityam tvaham nirmama: ||

### MEANING BY DR.VNV:

Lakshmi is the Sovereign Goddess of all the worlds, as nArAyaNa is the God. She is the inseparable consort. We fall at Her feet to be able to acquire the upAya of the Lord's feet to surrender unto.

May I always perform unostentatious service, without vanity, to the Lord who is full of auspicious qualities!

### DR.S.PADMANABHAN'S COMMENTS:

The sixth verse is specially devoted to a resume of the dvaya mantra treated earlier, with special reference to the role played by Lakshmi as a mediator (purashakAra) between the Lord and the jeevan. Already this concept has been dealt with by the AlwArs and explained by AchAryAs like Yaamuna and







RaamAnuja in their StOtra ratnam and Gadya trayam respectively. According to this tradition, ParAsara resorts to SrI first (SrI Prapatti) and then approaches the Lord through Her mediacy. SrI is called the mistress of all the universe (ISAnA), the consort of the Supreme Lord and ever associated with Him. The author also suggests in this context the etymologies of the word SrI as "one who abides in the highest abode" (SrayatE). This incidentally explains the term SrImat forming part of the dvaya mantra. Explaining the word nArAyaNa forming part of the same mantra, ParASara calls Him "One who is the repository of all benevolent qualities", which makes Him as one who is fit to be resorted to. According to the commentator nArAyaNa Muni, these qualities which draw a devotee are twelve in number such as:

1. Souseelya (Capacity of uniting easily with the layman/PamarA-s),
2. VatsalyA (Parental affection),
3. KaaruNya (Compassion),
4. audArya (generosity),
5. Krutitva (the capacity to fulfil any undertaking),
6. Krtajn~atva (gratefulness),
7. svAmitva (Lordship),
8. Sulabatva (easy accessibility),
9. Sarvajn~atva (omniscience),
10. SarvaSaktitva (Omnipotence),
11. ParipUrNatva (perfect plentitude) and
12. ParamOdAratva (remarkable magnanimity).

ParASara declares that he surrenders at the feet of Hari who is thus known as







the Supreme Benefactor to all humanity. This, in other words, is the path of SaraNAgati as distinguished from that of Bhakti.

Explaining the latter portion of the dvaya mantra, ParASara states that he aspires to render dASya (service without any reservation or spatio-temporal condition) to the Lord who is ever associated with SrI, She being a means towards that end. He has thus brought out the meaning of the word **namah** also, which is the last member of the dvaya mantra. As in the Moolamantra, the word **namah** here also expresses the desire to remove all the egotism and selfishness (**nirmama**). The commentator further points out that the method of construing the sentences of this verse according to the old tradition, in which the second part (uttarakhANDa) is understood first, and then the first part (PoorvakhANDa).

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY DR.VS

Here, the significance of dvaya mantra is explained by Bhattar. SwAmy Desikan describes this mantra as a tAntrika mantra. The links of this mantram to Moola Mantram is saluted by a passage in PaancarAtra MahOpanishad:

लक्ष्मीनारायणमयं प्रणवार्थं प्रकाशकं

सत्यं ज्ञानानन्दरूपं श्रीकरं तं नमाम्यहम् ।

जीवन्तर्यामिणं देवं सर्वान्तर्यामिणं प्रभुं

अर्चावितारं सद्विष्णुं मकारं तं नमाम्यहम् ॥

lakshmInArAyaNamayam praNavArtha prakASakam

Satya-jn~Anandaroopam SrIkaram tam namAmyaham |

jIvantaryAmiNam dEvam sarvAntaryAmiNam prabhum





arcAvatAram sadvishNum makAram tam namAmyaham ||



dvayam - SrIrangam Panguni utara serthi (thanks-SrI Murali bhattar)

dvaya mantram is about Lakshmi NarAyaNan and is considered the essence of PanchOpanishad. It is called dvaya because it is constituted by the union of two celebrated mantras from KaThavalli (Sruthi) dealing with upAya and upEya (means and end). It is also considered by some as a dvayam (combination of two) of varaNa and samarpaNa (prayer to the Lord for protection and surrendering oneself to the Lord expressly for His service). dvayam is recognized as the Mantra rAja or the king of mantras. As mentioned earlier, the deep meanings of dvayam are explained in the SaraNAGati gadyam of AchArya RaamAnuja. Sriya: pathitvam of the Lord is celebrated here; PurushakAra prapatti is saluted here right at the beginning of this gadyam. The six meaning of SrI sabdham has been elaborated by SwAmy Desikan based on the deeper meanings presented by SaraNAGati gadyam. The famous passage, "tEnAkAram Sriyam





jn~AtvA jn~atavyO bhagavAn Hari:" is a grand summation of the dvaya mantram. The name SrI has been explained as having six derivations that celebrate Her PurushakAratvam, upAyatvam and upEyatvam (SrIyatE/She is sought, SrayatE/she seeks the Lord for the protection of the erring souls, sruNOti/ She listens, SrAvayati/She makes Her Lord listen, SruNAti/She destroys the faults of the ASritAs, and SrINAti/ She fills the world with her virtues).

The Lord, Sriya: Pathi has made clear that we perform SaraNAgati to Him and His Divine consort using the dvaya mantram:

अनेनैव तु मन्त्रेण स्वात्मानं मयि निक्षिपेत् ।

मयि निक्षिप्त-कर्तव्यो कृतकृत्यो भविष्यति ॥

anEnaiva tu mantrENa svAtmAnam Mayi nikshipEt |

mayi nikshipta-kartavyO kruta-krityO bhavishyati ||

The Lord says here "By this mantra alone, one should entrust oneself unto Me; having fulfilled the duty of surrendering unto Me, the jeevan will become one who has done what ought to be done". There can not be a higher praise on the power of the dvaya mantram.

dvayam consists of eight words: SrIman, nArAyana, caraNau, SaraNam, PrapadyE, SrImatE, nArAyaNaya, namah.

When the words are compounded, it has been suggested that this mantra has six words: SrImannArAyaNacaranau, SaraNam, prapadyE, SrImatE, nArAyaNaya, namah.

PrapatyE is the verb with profound meaning. The rest of the five terms are set in different cases.







Lord Krishna performed upadesam for His dear sishya, Arjuna



## SLOKAM 7

मत्प्राप्त्यर्थतया मयोक्तमखिलं संत्यज्य धर्म पुनः

मामेकं मदवाप्तये शरणमित्यार्तोऽवसायं कुरु ।

त्वामेवं व्यवसाययुक्तमखिलज्ञानादिपूर्णो ह्यहं

मत्प्राप्तिप्रतिबन्धकैर्विरहितं कुर्यां शुचं मा कृथाः ॥

mat prAptyarthatayA mayOktam akhilam santyajya dharmam puna:

mAmekam madavAptaye SaraNam ityArtOvasAyam kuru |

tvAmevam vyavasAya yuktam akhila j~nAnAdi pUrNOhyaham

matprApti pratibandhakai: virahitam kuryAm Sucam mA krthA: ||

### MEANING BY DR.VNV:

The Lord says:

With a desire to reach Me, cast off other upAyAs towards this end. Even when performing regular sastraic acts, do not get attached to the fruits. Renounce the rewards. You suffer in an anguish as to how to get over the crisis. Cherish in your heart the well-proven fact that I possess all requisite qualities of j~nAna, Power etc., to do what is needed. I will remove all your sins, which are the obstacles for your deliverance. Do not grieve but have full faith in me.

### DR.S.PADMANABHAN'S COMMENTS:

Though not a mantra in the regular sense of the term, the carama sLOka is still considered as a rahasya and the sattvika-s impart it as a rahasya only to those





who have surrendered to them as disciples.

The Carama sLOka consists of 12 words. The first half comprising six words enjoins SaraNagati for one who stands helpless. The second half brings out the human end (PurushArtha is of the form of removal of the impediments, which are undesirable - anishTa). ParASara explains the meaning of the rahasya in the words of the Lord Himself: ... "completely relinquishing all dharmas seek Me alone as your refuge with full faith and utter helplessness. Once you are thus determined, I shall release you from all sins. Do not grieve".

Explaining the word **pratibandhaka** (impediment) the commentator states that both merit (puNya) and demerit (pApa) stand in the way of reaching God and hence both are to be avoided.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY DR.VS

This sLOkam deals with the carama sLOkam, the third of the three rahasyA-s. This sLOkam ordains one to perform SaraNagati expounded by ashTakashara and dvya mantrams. Lord KrishNa performed upadEsam for His dear sishyan, Arjuna, when he was totally confused about what to do in the battle field and despaired about his inability to perform the difficult to practice Karma and Jn~Ana yOgams as prerequisites for the observance of Bhakti Yogam for deliverance from the cycles of births and deaths. Our Lord took pity on the plight of His dear friend and sishya and instructed him on the easy to practice, never failing upAyam of Prapatti that has to be done only once to gain Moksha siddhi. Our Lord explained to Arjuna that only those with special Jn~Anam can practice Bhakthi Yogam and the rest who are unfit should resort to Prapatti at His feet and that He will stand in the place of Karma-Jn~Ana-Bhakthi yOgam and will bless the prapannan with the Phalans sought after in a trice. There are ten words/group of words in the Carama sLOkam and each of these words have multiple meanings. Carama sLOkam's ten "words" are:

- sarva-dharmAn parityajya







- maam
- yEkam
- SaraNam
- Vraja
- aham
- tvaa
- sarva pApEpya:
- MokshayishyAmi
- Maa Suca:

The First word group, "sarva dharmAn Parityajya" has six meanings.

The second word, "maam" has four meanings.

The third word, "yEkam" has been given six meanings by our PoorvAchAryAs.

The most meaningful word group in the Carama sLOkam is the last (tenth) one: "Maa Suca:". Twelve meanings have been given to it. This SaarArtham is revealed by SadAchAryAs to their key sisHyAs during the last moments of their lives (carama daSai).

The integrated meaning of the Carama sLOkam is: "Oh sentient being! Your Jn~Anam is insignificant. Your power is also limited. You live in this world for a very short time only. You are impatient about gaining Moksham. You do not have the capacity to understand or practice other upAyams like the arduous Bhakti yOgam. It is also known such upAyams like Bhakti yOgam are tardy in yielding the desired phalan. Therefore do not chase after them. I am easy to approach. I have the power to protect all. Therefore adopt me as your means for rakshaNam. Perform the Prapatti unto me with its five angams. Once You do that, you become kruta krutyan. Now it is my turn to protect you and you would



become very dear to Me for having performed your prapatti. My compassion for you is limitless. With all my unlimited svAtantryam and sankalpa Balam, I will intervene to destroy to their roots all the obstacles that stand in the way of the fruition of Your Prapatti. I will bless you with kaimkaryam for Me and elevate you to enjoy all bhOgams with Me as an equal. Do not grieve anymore.



'maa sucha' - SrI Varadar - (thanks SrI SaThakopa tatachar)



## SLOKAM 8

निश्चित्य त्वदधीनतां मयि सदा कर्माद्युपायान् हरे

कर्तुं त्यक्तुमपि प्रपत्तुमनलं सीदामि दुःखाकुलः ।

एतत् ज्ञानमुपेयुषो मम पुनस्सर्वापराधक्षयं

कर्तासीति दृढोऽस्मि ते तु चरमं वाक्यं स्मरन् सारथेः ॥

niScitya tvadadhInatAm mayi sadA karmAdyupAyAn hare

kartum tyaktumapi prapattumanalam sIdAmi du:khAkula: |

yEtat j~nAnam upeyushO mama puna: sarvAparAdha kshayam

kartA sIti druDhOsmi te tu caramam vAkyam smaran sArathE: |

### MEANING BY DR.VNV:

Oh my Lord! Hari, Who wipes off all my sins! I am a mere subservient to you. I am incapable of performing any yOga (like karmayOga) or even abandoning it; why, for that matter, even incapable of performing Prapatti! So it is that I grieve and tremble to think as to what is to befall me. My only consolation is Your words that I recall now - the words You uttered, as the Charioteer, as the Last Testament - I now have implicit faith in You that You will extirpate all my sins serving as my sole refuge. Hence I have no burden, no worry, no grief!

### COMMENTS BY DR.S.PADMANABHAN:

The final verse is in the form of the conviction made by an individual soul before the Lord. This may be explained as follows: "Oh Lord Hari! I am fully convinced of the fact that I am entirely dependent upon Your will, at all times.





As such I am unable either to implement or totally give up several disciplines mentioned by You in the GitA such as those of Karma, Jn~Ana and Bhakti. Even regarding prapatti, I am in the same state of mind and I am helplessly miserable. However I remember the final means (**carama upAya**) mentioned by You as the Charioteer of Arjuna, and I am fully convinced that You are going to absolve me of all the sins or impediments that stand in the way of my reaching Your feet.



Sthalasayana perumal thiruvadi-thanks Sri Senthil

ParASara makes it clear that a real devotee finds it extremely difficult to implement or give up any of the four means of salvation including SaraNAgati. The reason for such a helpless state of mind is the fact that the individual soul has no independence whatsoever to adopt any means, nor does he have any knowledge regarding the suitability of a particular means to his own peculiar condition in life. As such there is no other way for such an ardent devotee than



to recollect the idea conveyed by the Lord through the carama sLOka, and to be fully prepared, without any speck of doubt, to place complete trust in the Lord that he would clear all the impediments that lie in the path of his spiritual progress. This conviction, this trust, relieves him of all undue worries and makes him happy and blissful till he attains his goal.

The commentator nArAyaNa Muni notes towards the end that the meanings of the Moola mantra, dvaya mantra and carama sLOka are explained through the first, fifth and seventh verses of this hymn respectively. A further point of interest according to some is that ParASara belongs to that of category of prapanna-s who adopt the sadvaAraka prapatti, that is, Prapatti, which is subsidiary to bhakti, and thus differs from those to whom prapatti is the principal factor (angi), called advAraka prapatti.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY DR.VS

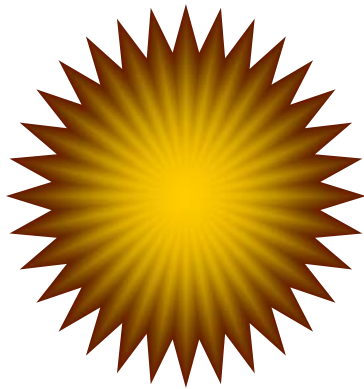
In this final sLOkam, the real devotee recalls the meanings of the three rahasyams and laments over his limitations to practice the upAyams for Moksham. This devotee confesses that he is comforted by the assurance given by the Lord to Arjuna thru the carama sLOkam and that he has full trust in the Lord's promise to extirpate all the pApa-puNyams that stand in the way of Moksham. The devotee assures the Lord that he would not grieve anymore about his former helpless state. Thus ends the ashTa sLOki on a triumphant note: "druDhOsmi te tu caramam vAkyam smaran sArathE:"

SrI ParASara Bhattar TiruvadigaLE SaraNam

dAsan,

Oppiliappan Koil VaradAchAri SadagOpan







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